

## Message Text

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14

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2137

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AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USUN

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 4609

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI PRESS ON IDF RESCUE OPERATION

SUMMARY: COMMENTATORS LAUD IDF'S SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNMENT'S DARING DECISION TO RESCUE ISRAELI HOSTAGES AND AIR FRANCE CREW. PRIME MINISTER RABIN COMES IN FOR SPECIAL PRAISE FROM ALL QUARTERS. PRESS WARNS AGAINST EXCESSIVE EUPHORIA, AND URGES CONSTANT VIGILANCE IN CONTINUING FIGHT AGAINST INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. COMMENTATORS NOTE THAT FLAGGING NATIONAL MORALE HAS RECEIVED BADLY-NEEDED AND LONG-AWAITED BOOST. PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE IS INTERPRETED AS SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL IN UPCOMING UNSC DEBATE. END SUMMARY

1. ALL NEWSPAPERS JULY 5 DEVOTE EXTENSIVE FRONTPAGE COVERAGE AND  
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EDITORIAL COMMENTARY TO IDF RESCUE OPERATION OF ISRAELI HOSTAGES AND

AIR FRANCE CREW FROM ENTEBBE AIRPORT. PRESS ACCOUNTS FOCUS ON DESCRIPTION OF THE OPERATION, LOCAL AND WORLD REACTION TO IT, COVERAGE OF RABIN'S KNESSET STATEMENT AND PRESS CONFERENCE WITH DEFENSE MINISTER PERES AND IDF LEADERS.

2. ALL EDITORIALS PRAISE THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION WITH SPECIAL MENTION FOR THE ROLE PLAYED BY PRIME MINISTER RABIN. THEY ARE UNANIMOUS IN LAUDING THE IDF IN SUPERLATIVES FOR ITS HEROISM AND DARING IN CARRYING OUT RESCUE OPERATION UNDER EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES AND AT GREAT DISTANCE FROM ISRAEL. FOLLOWING IS A SAMPLE OF REPRESENTATIVE EDITORIAL COMMENT.

3. JERUSALEM POST DESCRIBES THE OPERATION AS "A LIGHTNING COMMANDO RAID OF EXCEPTIONAL BRILLIANCE AND DARING", EMPHASIZING THAT "THE ACTION WAS NOT MERELY A STRIKE FOR ISRAEL'S FREEDOM BUT WAS A BLOW FOR HUMANITY AS WELL." THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDES ON A NOTE OF CAUTION THAT "WHAT THE COUNTRY SHOULD CONCERN ITSELF WITH IS THE DANGER THAT THE PRESENT MOOD OF EXULTATION MAY GROW INTO RECKLESS EUPHORIA. THE TERRORIST MOVEMENT HAS BEEN BADLY HURT, BUT IT MAY BREAK OUT AFRESH IN A VINDICTIVE SPASM OF VIOLENCE. AS THE PRIME MINISTER SUGGESTED YESTERDAY, FRESH EFFORTS AND NEW METHODS OF COMBATTING TERRORISM MAY HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED."

4. AL HAMISHMAR COMMENTS THAT "SINCE THE OCTOBER WAR THE ISRAELI NATION HAS NOT BEEN SPOILED BY MANY SUCCESSES, AND IT WOULD SEEM THAT THIS IMPORTANT AND VITAL OPERATION WILL ENABLE THE NATION TO HOLD ITS HEAD HIGH AND TO HAVE ITS SELF-CONFIDENCE RESTORED."

5. HAARETZ EDITORIAL, AFTER LAUDING THE GOVERNMENT AND IDF, GOES ON TO NOTE THAT "THE PRESSURE ON THE GOVERNMENT BY THE HOSTAGES' FAMILIES HOWEVER UNDERSTANDABLE IT MAY BE REVEALED A WEAK SPOT WHICH SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN EXPOSED. THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT OUR ENEMIES COULD HAVE GAINED THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE IS A DEFECTIVE ELEMENT IN ISRAEL'S POSTURE OF STEADFASTNESS SINCE IT IS UNUSUALLY SENSITIVE TO THE SUFFERING OF THE INDIVIDUAL." HAARETZ RECALLS THAT AFTER THE OCTOBER WAR THE MEIR GOVERNMENT WAS SUBJECTED TO SIMILAR PRESSURE FOR THE RELEASE OF POWS AND THE RETURN OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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BODIES FROM EGYPT AND SYRIA, "A PRESSURE WHICH REDUCED THE MANEUVERABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE OTHER SIDE."

6. DAVAR WRITES THAT "ISRAEL IS ENTITLED TO EXPECT WORLDWIDE APPRECIATION FOR THE OPERATION SINCE IT WAS CARRIED OUT NOT ONLY FOR ITS OWN CITIZENS BUT IN THE INTEREST OF ALL THE OTHER STATES WHICH ARE VULNERABLE TO THE DANGER OF THE TERRORIST INTERNATIONAL."

7. DAVAR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT BARNEA NOTES "PRESIDENT FORD'S UNRESERVED SUPPORT FOR THE OPERATION" AND OBSERVES THAT "THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE LIES IN ITS PROMISE OF GUARANTEED SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL IN THE EXPECTED SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON UGANDA'S COMPLAINT AND IN ANY OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORUM DEALING WITH THIS SUBJECT."

8. HAARETZ POLITICAL COMMENTATOR GOLAN, USUALLY AN OUTSPOKEN CRITIC OF THE GOVERNMENT, ANALYZES THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS REGARDING THE HIJACKED AIRCRAFT. HE WRITES THAT "AT ALL STAGES THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATED UNSURPASSED LEADERSHIP. ALL CONTROVERSIES, WHETHER PETTY OR LARGE, HAVE VANISHED AND THE LEADERSHIP ACTED IN A UNITED FASHION TOWARDS ONE GOAL: THE SAFE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES. THE RESULT WAS BALANCED DECISIONS AND CORRECT STEPS LEADING TO A FINAL RESULT WHICH NOT ONLY WAS OPERATIONALLY SUCCESSFUL BUT ALSO ACCEPTABLE IN WORLD CAPITOLS."

9. HAARETZ MILITARY COMMENTATOR SCHIFF DESCRIBES THE MILITARY ASPECTS OF THE OPERATION, ATTRIBUTING ITS SUCCESS TO "EFFICIENT PLANNING, TACTICAL BRILLIANCE, SURGICAL PRECISION IN EXECUTION BUT ALSO A GREAT DEAL OF LUCK." SCHIFF PRAISES THE "SUPERB INTELLIGENCE JOB ON THE GROUND" DESCRIBING IT AS "A CENTRAL ELEMENT IN THE SUCCESS OF THE RESCUE OPERATION". FINALLY, HE NOTES THAT "IT WAS NOT ONLY AN ISRAELI AND JEWISH VICTORY OVER PALESTINIAN TERRORISM BUT ALSO THE VICTORY OF CIVILIZATION OVER ARAB TERRORISM WHICH IN RECENT YEARS HAS JOINED FORCES WITH INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM."

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## Message Attributes

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